

VZCZCXR07877
PP RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM

DE RUEHJA #0301 0450813

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 140813Z FEB 08

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7993

INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1999

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1521

RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2323

RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3666

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1583

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4723

RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0570

RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 000301

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP, DRL, DRL/AWH
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS -- MINOR SUSPECT ACQUITTED IN MUNIR
CASE

REF: A. JAKARTA 279

[¶](#)B. JAKARTA 173

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[¶](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On February 12, a Jakarta court acquitted a minor suspect in the murder of human rights activist Munir Said Thalib. Rohainil Aini--a former low-level airline employee--had been accused of assisting in the murder. With the police continuing their wider investigation, human rights activists--who saw the Rohainil case as weak anyway--do not see the verdict as a setback. END SUMMARY.

[¶](#)2. (SBU) ACQUITTAL: There has been more news in a key human rights case. A day after the Central Jakarta Court handed down a conviction for former airline executive Indra Setiawan (ref A), the same court acquitted a minor suspect in the case. Rohainil Aini, a former low-level Garuda Airlines employee, was accused of assisting in the murder and of forging a letter which allowed Polycarpus to board the September 7, 2004, flight on which Munir was poisoned to death. (Note: Polycarpus was sentenced to 20 years for committing the murder--see ref B.) Polycarpus had asked Rohainil to type the letter, claiming he was acting upon orders of then-Garuda vice president of corporate security, Ramelgia Anwar. The judge determined that Rohainil was innocent of the charges, noting that typing the letter was "part of her job description."

[¶](#)3. (C) The case against Rohainil was admittedly weak, a human rights lawyer told poloff. Although ultimately they did not see the acquittal as a setback in the overall investigation into Munir's murder, some activists regretted the decision. Asfinawati, of the Munir Solidarity Committee (KASUM), said the court should have heeded testimony of Rohainil's boss, Karmel Sembiring, who said Rohainil "had no authority to issue the letter." Prosecutors plan to appeal the case.

[¶](#)4. (C) THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES: Police say they will continue their investigation of Munir's case. To date, three suspects have been tried in relation to the murder and two of them convicted (see reftels). Human rights contacts say that facts that emerged in the trials to date can help unravel the

network involved in what one judge called a "higher conspiracy." According to Harris Azhar, Deputy Coordinator of well-known human rights NGO Kontras, the two convictions to date "are only one level" of a larger conspiracy. Usman Hamid, lawyer for Suciwati, Munir's widow, told the press after Rohainil's acquittal that he thought cooperation with law enforcement on the investigation was going well and that police would begin to call in more suspects.

¶5. (C) NOT A SETBACK: Given that the case against Rohainil was quite weak to begin with, it is not seen as a setback to the wider investigation, which proceeds. Though her actions raised suspicions for sure, Rohainil was by no means a key player in the murder. Human rights contacts affirmed to us their belief that police (and the government) remain committed to moving forward.

HEFFERN